

## ANNOUNCEMENT OF FEDERAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Federal Agency Name(s): Oceanic and Atmospheric Research (OAR), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Department of Commerce

Funding Opportunity Title: NOAA Climate Program Office

Announcement Type: Initial

Funding Opportunity Number: NOAA-OAR-CPO-2013-2003599

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 11.431, Climate and Atmospheric Research

Dates: 1. Letters of Intent

Letters of Intent for all Competitions should be received by the Competition Manager by 5 p.m. Eastern Time, February 5, 2013. Applicants who have not received a response to their Letter of Intent within four weeks should contact the Competition Manager.

#### 2. Full Applications

Applications for this Competition must be received by 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time, April 8, 2013. Applications received after this time will not be considered for funding. For applications submitted through grants.gov a date and time receipt indication is included and will be the basis of determining timeliness. Hard copy submissions will be date and time stamped when they are received in the Climate Program Office. Faxed or emailed copies of applications will not be accepted.

Funding Opportunity Description: The NOAA Climate Program Office's (CPO) Regional Integrated Sciences and Assessments (RISA) program supports research teams that conduct innovative, interdisciplinary, user-inspired, and regionally relevant research that informs resource management and public policy. CPO funds eleven different RISA teams across the United States (US) and Pacific Islands, many of which are a model for interdisciplinary science and assessment.

NOAA's RISA program is overseen by CPO's Climate and Societal Interactions (CSI) division. CSI provides leadership and support for decision support research, assessments and climate services development activities in support of adaptation. In addition to RISA, CSI's programs include the International Research and Applications Project (IRAP), the Sectoral Applications

Research Program (SARP), the National Integrated Drought Information System (NIDIS), and the Coastal and Ocean Climate Applications program (COCA).

CSI is also an active partner in the NOAA National Climate Data Center's (NCDC) efforts to build an integrated regional climate services partnership. NCDC employs six Regional Climate Services Directors (RCSDs) to coordinate and lead this partnership bringing together NOAA offices and close external partners such as RISA teams, Regional Climate Centers, State Climatologists, and Sea Grant. The partnership will help make climate information relevant and accessible to people across the US. NOAA seeks to marshal climate assets and partners towards the common goal of assessing regional needs and vulnerabilities and then supporting the development and delivery of timely climate services that aid adaptation and mitigation choices.

RISA and CSI activities address the societal challenges identified in NOAA's Next-Generation Strategic Plan (NGSP): i) climate impacts on water resources; ii) coasts and climate resilience; iii) sustainability of marine ecosystems; and iv) changes in the extremes of weather and climate. These efforts support NOAA's vision to create and sustain enhanced resilience in ecosystems, communities, and economies, as outlined in the NGSP.

In FY2013, NOAA CPO and its partners are holding two competitions for research funding. Competition 1 is soliciting proposals to two priorities: one RISA team focused on the South Central region of the US (Priority 1); and one RISA team focused on the upper Midwestern US (Priority 2). For Competition 1, we estimate that \$3.5 million over five years will be available for each priority pending budget appropriations. Awards will be at a funding level of approximately \$700,000 per year.

Competition 2 is soliciting proposals only from RISA teams and their partners to conduct projects relevant to one of four priorities: Preparing for floods in urban coastal communities (Priority 3); Scenario and management planning processes (Priority 4); Drought monitoring and prediction products to support decision making (Priority 5); and Climate impacts on marine and Great Lakes ecosystems (Priority 6). For Competition 2, we estimate that \$500 thousand to \$3 million will be available for approximately 5 to 15 awards. Awards will be at a funding level between \$75,000 and \$200,000 per year.

Please download the RISA Information Sheet for more detailed information about each priority ([http://www.cpo.noaa.gov/cpo\\_pa/risa/](http://www.cpo.noaa.gov/cpo_pa/risa/)).

## FULL ANNOUNCEMENT TEXT

### I. Funding Opportunity Description

#### A. Program Objective

The NOAA Climate Program Office's (CPO) Regional Integrated Sciences and Assessments (RISA) program supports research teams that conduct innovative, interdisciplinary, user-inspired, and regionally relevant research that informs resource management and public policy. CPO funds eleven different RISA teams across the United States (US) and Pacific Islands, many of which are a model for interdisciplinary science and assessment. RISAs have been nationally and internationally recognized for their innovations in providing support to decision makers on the ground who are managing risks associated with climate variability and change.

NOAA's RISA program is overseen by CPO's Climate and Societal Interactions (CSI) division. CSI provides leadership and support for decision support research, assessments, and climate services development activities in support of adaptation. In addition to RISA, CSI's programs include the International Research and Applications Project (IRAP), the Sectoral Applications Research Program (SARP), the National Integrated Drought Information System (NIDIS), and the Coastal and Ocean Climate Applications program (COCA).

CSI is also an active partner in the NOAA National Climate Data Center's (NCDC) efforts to build an integrated regional climate services partnership. NCDC employs six Regional Climate Services Directors (RCSDs) to coordinate and lead this partnership bringing together NOAA offices and close external partners such as RISA teams, Regional Climate Centers, State Climatologists, and Sea Grant. The partnership will help make climate information relevant and accessible to people across the US. NOAA seeks to marshal climate assets and partners towards the common goal of assessing regional needs and vulnerabilities and then supporting the development and delivery of timely climate services that aid adaptation and mitigation choices.

CSI and NCDC activities address the societal challenges identified in NOAA's Next-Generation Strategic Plan (NGSP): i) climate impacts on water resources; ii) coasts and climate resilience; iii) sustainability of marine ecosystems; and iv) changes in the extremes of weather and climate. These efforts support NOAA's vision to create and sustain enhanced resilience in ecosystems, communities, and economies, as outlined in the NGSP. CSI supports both US- and internationally-focused activities to facilitate community-building and learning about the challenges and solutions associated with understanding and meeting the climate-related needs of decision makers.

## B. Program Priorities

In FY 2013, NOAA will accept individual applications for 2 Competitions, organized around two RISA program components: 5-year RISA awards; and smaller grants for RISA teams and their partners to encourage expansion of regional capacity to prepare for climate by enhancing or initiating partnerships for research. Investigators are highly encouraged to learn more about CPO and RISA prior to submitting applications. Program priorities for FY2013, along with the names and contact information of relevant Competition Managers, are provided in Program information sheets that can be found at the following website: <http://www.cpo.noaa.gov/opportunities>.

### 1. Competition 1 - New RISA awards

Through this announcement, we are soliciting proposals to fund one RISA team in the South Central US and possibly another RISA team in the Midwest. Current RISA regions generally cover two or three states, large watershed boundaries, or issue-focused areas (e.g., the urbanized, heavily populated corridor between Boston, New York, and Philadelphia). Teams focused on regions that contain coastlines are expected to include a component that focuses on the needs of coastal resource managers and links with NOAA coastal entities and issues. For proposals that include a focus area on drought, the proposal should speak to connections with the National Integrated Drought Information System (NIDIS) being developed by NOAA and partners ([www.drought.gov](http://www.drought.gov)). For these proposals, RISAs are encouraged to engage the preparedness communities (e.g., watershed, state or county entities, regional entities, federal agencies) in developing drought-related indicators and risk management triggers for preparedness and response.

#### 1.a. Priority 1 - South Central US

We are soliciting proposals for a RISA in the South Central region of the US. A proposed RISA could cover all or portions of a region that includes the states of Oklahoma, Texas, Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Tennessee. Applicants should consider what is manageable in terms of scoping the region and being an effective RISA endeavor.

#### 1.b. Priority 2 - the Midwestern US

NOAA, along with its partners in the USDA, is soliciting proposals for a RISA in the upper Midwestern US. A proposed RISA could cover all or portions of a region that includes the states of Iowa, Missouri, Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio. Applicants should distinguish their issue focus and, if appropriate, geographic coverage from the existing Great Lakes Integrated Sciences and Assessments (GLISA) program. Applicants should consider what is manageable in terms of scoping the region and being an effective RISA endeavor.

## 2. Competition 2 - Interagency Regional Research Partnerships

For this competition, we aim to encourage expansion of regional capacity to prepare for climate by enhancing or initiating partnerships for research. Proposals submitted to this competition must have at least one lead investigator who is a RISA scientist. Projects should have a regional focus. Those applicable to only one location and/or one user are not relevant to this announcement. Other programs within CSI are more germane for advancing climate or interdisciplinary knowledge for specific decision contexts (e.g. specific locations or users).

### 2.a. Priority 3 - Preparing for floods in urban coastal communities

Over eight million people in the US live in areas at risk to coastal flooding, and many of the nation's assets related to military readiness, energy, commerce, and ecosystems are located at or near the ocean. Urban coastal communities are particularly vulnerable to the effects of inundation, given their physical location in low-lying areas and presence of high-intensity land uses and population densities. Flood models and flood probabilities do not reflect longer-term climate variability and change or coastal system response to that variability or change. Recent studies document an increase in the rate and magnitude of global sea-level rise (SLR), and SLR is projected to continue through the next century. Higher mean sea levels increase the frequency, magnitude, and duration of flooding associated with episodic events, such as coastal storms, tsunamis, and astronomical high tides, which often have disproportionately high impacts in low-lying coastal regions.

While the scope, severity, and pace of future environmental change are difficult to project, it is clear that urban coastal communities may be affected in profound ways. Development, infrastructure, and ecosystem management activities will continue in urban coastal environments, and new techniques are needed to ensure that assets are constructed and maintained to be sustainable in the face of climate variability, change, and extremes. Planning for such events must include not only response, but preparedness for risks and impacts. To advance the knowledge and capacity of coastal resource managers, floodplain managers, emergency managers, engineers, and other design professionals, and land-use or urban planners, priority areas of research include (but are not limited to):

Priority 3A - Improving knowledge in the following areas: a) worst case scenarios of flooding, and b) impact analysis - analysis of the likely impacts of a given flood event requires understanding of both physical processes and societal factors that shape the vulnerability of urban coastal communities and infrastructure systems.

Priority 3B - Enhancing networks to prepare and respond to coastal flooding through: a) decision-support tools - improved flood map visualizations, storm surge early warning systems, and other decision support tools that provide easier access to credible data and information can improve upon the limited scope of static, outdated inundation maps, b)

knowledge networks - fora to facilitate knowledge sharing and decision making. Further exploration is needed, and c) risk communication - strategies for communicating risk to the public and behavioral research on what motivates communities to take action, and d) participatory processes - approaches such as scenario planning and vulnerability and adaptation assessments for use in urban coastal planning.

Priority 3C - Supporting preparedness and response strategies through research to project the long-term viability and lifecycle costs of the following strategies considered by decision makers: a) sustainable building techniques and practices, b) ecosystem services - projected benefits of wetland restoration, living shorelines, and low-impact development under different conditions of climate and sea level extremes, and c) integration of 'gray' and 'green' infrastructures -integration of traditional built structures with ecosystem-based approaches to leverage the services each provides and maximize co-benefits for the wide range of activities in urban coastal settings.

#### 2.b. Priority 4 - Scenario planning and management planning processes

The DOI National Park Service (NPS), the USDA Forest Service (FS), and the DOI Bureau of Land Management (BLM), along with other land management agencies, are grappling with how to plan for the potential consequences of climatic and socioeconomic changes that will affect the natural and cultural resources under their stewardship. Traditional planning methods, which generally assume future conditions will be like the past, are little help for long range planning under changing conditions. Participatory resource management planning processes that engage scientists and managers in a structured dialogue about future scenarios offer conservation practitioners a "decision space" in which to test ideas and seek actions that are robust across a range of possible futures. To this end, the NPS, FS, and BLM seek to develop partnerships with RISA and other scientists to work on adaptation decisions through scenario or other management planning processes. For the NPS, applicants are encouraged to embark on these partnerships within the context of the participatory processes developed by the NPS climate change program. The FS is interested in engaging RISA scientists in its existing resource management planning processes in the context of the new USFS Planning Rule and building off of the Resources Planning Act Assessment and other efforts. The BLM is interested in using information at multiple temporal and spatial scales to enhance its existing resource management planning processes. In addition, a National Climate Assessment (NCA) scenario effort is seeking to develop a more robust framework for national, regional and local scenario preparation to support decision making and risk- based climate analysis across the U.S. and encourages RISA partnerships in this effort. Proposals are being solicited to do one or more of the following:

Priority 4A - Develop and implement processes with NPS

Priority 4B - Develop and implement processes with BLM

#### Priority 4C - Develop and implement processes with USFS

Proposals that undertake a planning process that involves managers from multiple agencies (e.g., NPS, BLM, USFS) are highly encouraged.

#### 2.c. Priority 5 - Drought monitoring and prediction products to support decision making

A regional focus on drought monitoring and prediction is needed to support decision making on relevant scales. Research proposals submitted to this call will use an integrated team approach to identify drought information needs for a specific U.S. region. Proposals will focus on one or both (if possible within budget constraints) of the following areas:

Priority 5A - The evaluation of existing drought indicators and their application in regional to local decision making, and if needed, the development of new indicators designed to support region-specific policy, planning, and decision making

Priority 5B - The use of climate change projections of existing, regionally relevant, drought indicators for 21st century drought conditions to better understand and characterize potential impacts to inform long-term infrastructure policy, planning, and decision making.

#### 2.d. Priority 6 - Climate impacts on marine and Great Lakes ecosystems

Climate variability and change present challenges for resource managers and other decision makers working to enhance the resilience and sustainability of coastal and marine ecosystems. Significant needs for climate information have emerged across a diversity of coastal- and marine-related decision contexts, including fisheries management, protected species conservation, habitat protection and restoration, design and management of protected areas, place-based spatial planning and management, and ecosystem restoration. Decision makers need information on past, current, and projected climate-related impacts on marine and Great Lakes ecosystems at regional to sub-regional scales to design and implement "climate-ready," adaptive management. Integration of climate change into resource stewardship efforts is critical to enhancing the resilience of the Nation's marine and Great Lakes ecosystems and the communities and economies that depend on them. Proposals are being solicited to focus on one or more of the following areas:

Priority 6A - Advancing coupled regional-scale climate and marine/Great Lakes ecosystem observations, models, and/or projections to inform resource stewardship and management in a changing climate;

Priority 6B - Advancing integration of climate information into regional marine planning efforts to inform, address, and adapt decisions related to multiple ocean/Great Lakes uses in a way that promotes ecosystem resilience in a changing climate.

### C. Program Authority

49 U.S.C. 47720(b), 15 U.S.C. 2904, 15 U.S.C. 2931-2934

## II. Award Information

### A. Funding Availability

1. Competition 1 is soliciting proposals to two priorities: one RISA team focused on the South Central region of the US (Priority 1); and one RISA team focused on the upper Midwestern US (Priority 2). For Competition 1, we estimate that \$3.5 million over five years will be available for each priority pending budget appropriations. Awards will be at a funding level of approximately \$700,000 per year.

2. Competition 2 is soliciting proposals only from RISA teams and their partners to conduct projects relevant to one of four priorities: Preparing for floods in urban coastal communities (Priority 3); Scenario and management planning processes (Priority 4); Drought monitoring and prediction products to support decision making (Priority 5); and Climate impacts on marine and Great Lakes ecosystems (Priority 6). For Competition 2, we estimate that \$500 thousand to \$3 million will be available for approximately 5 to 15 awards in FY 2013. Awards will be at a funding level between \$75,000 and \$200,000 per year. Federal funding for FY 2014 may be used to fund some awards submitted under this competition. Current or previous recipients are eligible to apply for a new award that builds on, but does not replicate, activities covered in the current or previous award.

### B. Project/Award Period

Competition 1. Projects are intended to last 5 years from the start date

Competition 2. Projects are expected to last for 1- 2 years from the start date.

### C. Type of Funding Instrument

The funding instrument for awards will generally be a grant. If, however, it is anticipated that NOAA will be substantially involved in the implementation of the project, the funding instrument should be a cooperative agreement. Examples of substantial involvement may include, but are not limited to, applications for collaboration between NOAA scientists and a recipient scientist or contemplation by NOAA of detailing Federal personnel to work on proposed projects. NOAA will make decisions regarding the use of a

cooperative agreement on a case-by-case basis. Funding for contractual arrangements for services and products for delivery to NOAA is not available under this announcement.

### III. Eligibility Information

#### A. Eligible Applicants

Competition 1. Eligible applicants are institutions of higher education, other nonprofits, commercial organizations, international organizations, and state, local and Indian tribal governments. Federal agencies or institutions are not eligible to receive Federal assistance under this notice.

Competition 2. The lead institution for each application must be one of the institutions included in the eleven existing RISA awards. Existing RISA awards include those on no-cost extensions.

#### B. Cost Sharing or Matching Requirement

None

#### C. Other Criteria that Affect Eligibility

Other Criteria that Affect Eligibility

Competition 1. None

Competition 2. One or more of the lead investigators for each application must be a lead investigator or co-investigator on an existing RISA award. All sub-awards, including those involving other RISA institutions, will be handled by the applicant.

### IV. Application and Submission Information

#### A. Address to Request Application Package

Applications are submitted through [grants.gov](https://grants.gov) under "Apply for Grants". If an applicant does not have Internet access, CPO Grants Manager Diane Brown should be contacted by mail at NOAA Climate Program Office (R/CP1), SSMC3, Room 12734, 1315 East-West

Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910 for hard copy submission instructions. Please allow two weeks after receipt for a response.

Please refer to the information about submission dates and times above to help ensure your application is received on time.

## B. Content and Form of Application

### A. Letter of Intent (LOI)

The purpose of the LOI process is to provide information to potential applicants on the relevance of their proposed project to the Climate Program Office in advance of preparing a full application. Full applications will be encouraged only for LOIs deemed relevant. While it is in the best interest of the applicants and their institutions to submit an LOI, applicants who do not submit an LOI are allowed to submit a full application.

LOIs should be submitted by e-mail to [oar.cpo.risa.gov](mailto:oar.cpo.risa.gov) by the deadline specified in section IV.D below (subject line should identify PI's name, email, and Competition and Priority name). The LOI should provide a concise description of the proposed work and its relevance to the targeted Competition. The LOI should be no more than two pages in length and should include the components listed below. If these components are not included or the LOI is submitted late, the LOI may not be considered by the Competition Manager.

- ï Identification of the Competition that is being targeted in the LOI.
- ï A tentative project title.
- ï Name(s) and institution(s) of all Principal Investigator(s), and the Lead Principal Investigator.
- ï Statement of the problem.
- ï Brief summary of work to be completed, methodology to be used, data sets needed or to be collected, and approximate cost of the project.
- ï Relevance to the Competition that is being targeted.

A response to the LOI from the Climate Program Office (e-mail or letter) will be sent to the investigator within four weeks after the LOI's due date encouraging or discouraging a full application on the basis of its relevance to the targeted Competition. The final decision to submit a full application will be made by the investigator.

## 1. Application

Applications must use 12-point font type with one-inch margins on standard 8.5 by 11 inch paper.

Proposal Requirement - Page Length Limit

Title Page - 1

Abstract - 1

Results from prior research - 2

Competition 1 - Statement of Work (inc. figs and refs) - 25

Competition 2 - Statement of Work (inc. figs and refs) - 17

Current and Pending Support (only Lead PIs) - 5

Bios (only Lead PIs) - 2

Budget Table, Justification, and Subcontract information - None

Federal Forms - None

Letters of Support - 5

The following forms and elements are required in each application. Failure to comply with these provisions will result in applications being returned without review.

(1) Title page: The title page shall identify the lead Principal Investigator (PI) and the institutional representative and should clearly indicate this competition number. If more than one investigator is listed on the title page, please identify the lead investigator. The PI and institutional representative should be identified by full name, title, organization, telephone number and address. For paper submissions, the PI and the institutional representative must sign the title page. The total amount of Federal funds being requested should be listed for each budget period.

(2) Abstract: An abstract must be included and should contain an introduction of the problem, rationale and a brief summary of work to be completed. The abstract should appear

on a separate page, headed with the application title, institution(s), investigator(s), total proposed cost and budget period.

(3) Results from prior research: The results of each prior research project by the Principal Investigators (during the last 3 years) relevant to the proposed effort should be summarized in brief paragraphs.

(4) Statement of work: The proposed project must be completely described, including identification of the problem, scientific objectives, proposed methodology, relevance to the goal of the Climate Program and the priorities of the Program to which you are submitting the proposal (listed above). Benefits of the proposed project to the general public and the scientific community and data sharing procedures should be discussed. Mission goal must be broken down by year for multi year project within the proposal.

(5) Budget Justification: A brief description of the expenses listed on the budget and how they address the proposed work. Item justifications must include salaries, equipment, publications, supplies, tuition, travel, etc. Purchases of equipment greater than \$5000 must include a purchase versus lease justification.

(6) Budget: Budget numbers corresponding with the descriptions contained in the statement of work must be included. In addition to including the total budget on the SF424, the application must include the total budget and budgets for years 1 and 2 in separate columns in Section B on page 1 on the SF424A. (Note that this revised 424A Section B format is a NOAA requirement that is not reflected in the Instructions for the SF 424A).

A copy of the institution's current Indirect Cost Rate Agreement, a detailed itemized budget for all years and a total itemized budget must also be included. Travel must be itemized to include destination, airfare, per diem, lodging and ground travel.

A negotiated indirect cost rate agreement must be attached to the application to justify any indirect cost charges.

(7) Bio: Bio with a link to curriculum vitae are sought with each application. Reference lists should be limited to all publications in the last three years with up to five other relevant papers.

(8) Current and pending support: For each Principal Investigator and Co-Principal Investigator(s), submit a list of all current and pending Federal support that includes project title, supporting agency with grant number, investigator months per year, dollar value and duration. Requested values should be listed for pending support.

(9) Letters of Support: Letters can include those from entities who will benefit from the RISA projects or who will contribute as a partner on a project. See RISA FY13 Information Sheet for more details.

(10) DUNS Number: All applications must have a DUNS (Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System) number when applying for federal grants. No application is deemed complete without the DUNS number, and only the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) may grant exceptions.

(11) National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA): NOAA must analyze the potential environmental impacts, as required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), of each applicant's project that is seeking NOAA federal funding opportunities. Detailed information on NOAA's compliance with NEPA can be found at the following NOAA NEPA website: <http://www.nepa.noaa.gov/>, including the NOAA Administrative Order 216-6 for NEPA, [http://www.nepa.noaa.gov/NAO216\\_6\\_TOC.pdf](http://www.nepa.noaa.gov/NAO216_6_TOC.pdf), and the Council of Environmental Quality implementation regulations, [http://ceq.eh.doe.gov/nepa/regs/ceq/toc\\_ceq.htm](http://ceq.eh.doe.gov/nepa/regs/ceq/toc_ceq.htm).

No NEPA information is required with the initial application. However, after review of the application, NEPA information may be requested if NOAA determines such information is required (See below).

Consequently, if NOAA so requests, applicants will be required to provide detailed information on the activities to be conducted, locations, sites, species, and habitat to be

affected, possible construction activities, and any environmental concerns that may exist (e.g., the use and disposal of hazardous or toxic chemicals, introduction of non-indigenous species, impacts to endangered and threatened species, aquaculture projects, and impacts to coral reef systems). In addition to providing specific information that will serve as the basis for any required impact analyses, applicants may also be requested to assist NOAA in drafting an environmental assessment, if NOAA determines an assessment is required. Applicants will also be required to cooperate with NOAA in identifying feasible measures to reduce or avoid any identified adverse environmental impacts of their application. The failure to do so shall be grounds for not selecting an application. In some cases if additional information is required after an application is selected, funds can be withheld by the Grants Officer under a special award condition requiring the recipient to submit additional environmental compliance information sufficient to enable NOAA to make an assessment on any impacts that a project may have on the environment.

For each competition, guidance for page limits is given in the tables above.

For all competitions, Federal Forms (SF424, SF424A, SF424B, CD511), the NEPA Statement, and other Federally mandated forms are not included within page counts.

### C. Submission Dates and Times

#### 1. Letters of Intent

Letters of Intent for all Competitions should be received by the Competition Manager by 5 p.m. Eastern Time, TBD, 2013. Applicants who have not received a response to their Letter of Intent within four weeks should contact the Competition Manager.

#### 2. Full Applications

Applications for this Competition must be received by 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time, TBD. Applications received after this time will not be considered for funding. For applications submitted through grants.gov a date and time receipt indication is included and will be the basis of determining timeliness. Hard copy submissions will be date and time stamped when they are received in the Climate Program Office. Faxed or emailed copies of applications will not be accepted.

#### D. Intergovernmental Review

Applications under this program are not subject to Executive Order 12372, Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs.

#### E. Funding Restrictions

Fees and profit are disallowed.

#### F. Other Submission Requirements

Letters of Intent

Letters of Intent for all competitions should be sent to the Competition Manager.

Full Proposals

Applications are submitted through Grants.gov via "Apply for Grants".

Diane Brown

CPO Grants Manager

NOAA Climate Program Office (R/CP1), SSMC3, Room 12734,

1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910

#### V. Application Review Information

##### A. Evaluation Criteria

NOTE: Percentages reflect final weighting for proposals that make it through Stages 1 and 2, described below.

1. Importance/Relevance and Applicability of Application to the Program Goals (25%) - This criterion ascertains whether there is intrinsic value in the proposed work and/or relevance to NOAA, federal, regional, state, or local activities. For the CPO Grant Program Competition, this includes importance and relevance to the scientific priorities of the selected Competition(s) (See Section I.B Program Objective of this announcement for more details.).

a. Competition 1

50% of the above-stated relevance will be based on how well the proposed work supports the Program Objectives articulated in the RISA Program Information Sheet - Section 1.3

25% of the above-stated relevance will be based on how well the proposed work supports previously identified scientific information needs in the region and/or the ability to identify and address scientific information needs in a region

25% of the above-stated relevance will be based on the applicant's approach for engaging decision makers and building networks of relationships to help support decision makers with scientific information

b. Competition 2

50% of the above-stated relevance evaluation will be based on documentation within the proposal indicating the level of collaboration by the partner entity dedicated to the proposed project. Project proposals should demonstrate how research teams will collaborate with, and/or leverage, relevant research and decision-making institutions in the area of study, including: non-governmental organizations (NGOs), academia, extension services, state and local governments, private sector organizations, Federal agencies, etc. Evidence of collaboration can include in-kind research/staff time, workshop costs, computer time, or data gathering/analysis contributed by the partner to the proposed project. Federally-funded university researcher time already dedicated to another project cannot be used to meet this criterion. Applicants can also describe how new resources from a partner would provide funding to this project.

25% of the above-stated relevance evaluation will be based on documentation within the proposal of how the information resulting from the project will be used by decision makers.

25% of the above-stated relevance evaluation will be based on the importance and relevance to the scientific priorities of the selected Competition(s) (See Section I.B Program Objective of this announcement for more details.). Applicants must show how the proposed project will influence broad regional networks and/or multiple user groups across a RISA region or across multiple RISA regions.

## 2. Technical/Scientific Merit (52.5%)

This criterion assesses whether the approach is technically sound and/or innovative, if the methods are appropriate, and whether the goals of the Competition will be realized through clear project goals and objectives.

### a. Competition 1

40% of the above-stated Merit score will be based on how well the proposal articulates an innovative approach to advance RISA goals and objectives (see Section 1.3 of the RISA Program Information Sheet)

30% of the above-stated Merit score will be based on a clearly identified institutional framework for implementing the research articulated within the proposal

30% of the above-stated Merit score will be based on the credibility of the methods, data, analytical capabilities, and capacity building approaches

### b. Competition 2

40% of the above-stated Merit score will be based on how well the proposal articulates an innovative approach for solving problems associated with the priority (See Section I.B Program Objective of this announcement for more details.)

30% of the above-stated Merit score will be based on the credibility of the methods, data, analytical capabilities and capacity building approaches

30% of the above-stated Merit score will be based on how well the proposal advances goals and objectives of the existing RISA team

### 3. Overall Qualifications of Applicants (15%)

50% of the above-stated Qualifications score will be based on whether the applicant team possesses the necessary education, experience, training, facilities, and administrative resources to accomplish the project.

50% of the above-stated Qualifications score will be based on the PI's record of making his/her data accessible and usable by the scientific community.

### 4. Project Costs (7.5%)

This criterion evaluates the budget to determine if it is realistic and commensurate with the project needs and time frame.

### 5. Outreach and Education (0%)

For the two Grant Program Competitions under this announcement, this criterion is not scored.

## B. Review and Selection Process

Once a full application has been received, an administrative review will be conducted to determine compliance with requirements and completeness of the application.

The reviews will take place in two stages. In Stage 1, independent peer mail reviewers and/or independent peer panel reviewers consisting of both federal and non-federal experts will evaluate applications using the following three criteria described above: technical/scientific merit, overall qualifications of applicants, and project costs. Relevance will be assessed separately in Stage 2. The panel will not give consensus advice. The identity of mail reviewers and panel reviewers are privileged.

If a mail review is conducted during Stage 1, each reviewer will provide one score for each of three criteria: technical/scientific merit, overall qualifications of applicants, and project costs for each application.

If a panel review is conducted during Stage 1, each reviewer will provide one score for each of three criteria: technical/scientific merit, overall qualifications of applicants, and project costs for each application. The scores from the reviewers for each application will be combined using the weighting averages provided below to produce a single numerical score for Stage 1. Occasionally a reviewer may, due to lack of familiarity in a particular area, choose not to score a particular application. Proposals that score a 3.0 or higher (out of a possible high score of 5) in Stage 1 will proceed to Stage 2.

If only a mail peer review is conducted for stage 1, proposals that score a 3.0 or higher (out of a possible high score of 5) in Stage 1 will proceed to Stage 2.

If a mail review and a panel review are both conducted for Stage 1, the mail reviews will be provided to the Stage 1 review panel for use in its deliberations prior to providing its ratings. The Competition Manager will use only the weighted scores of the peer review panel to determine the average score for each proposal. Proposals that score a 3.0 or higher (out of a possible high score of 5) in Stage 1 will proceed to Stage 2.

In Stage 2, scores for Importance/Relevance and Applicability of Application to the Program Goals will be determined by a second panel comprising either federal or a combination of federal and non-federal partners. Each panel reviewer will provide a relevance score for each application that moved forward from Stage 1. The Stage 2 panel will not give consensus advice. The applications and their associated scores from Stage 1 will be provided to the Stage 2 panel.

The Stage 1 and Stage 2 weighting of scores for the individual criteria is shown in the following table:

Criterion	Stage 1 Weight	Stage 2 Weight	Final weight
1. Importance/Relevance and Applicability	0%	100%	25%
2. Technical/Scientific Merit	70%	0%	52.5%

3. Overall Qualifications of Applicants	20%	0%	15%
4. Project Costs	10%	0%	7.5%
5. Outreach and Education	0%	0%	0%
Stage Total	100%	100%	100%
Final weighting for each stage score	75%	25%	

To determine the final score, the scores from Stage 1 and Stage 2 will be combined, with a weighting of 75% for the Stage 1 score and 25% for the Stage 2 score, leading to the overall weightings for each criterion reported in section V.A above. The final score for each application will be used to determine the numerical rank order of proposals within each Competition.

The Competition Manager will recommend applications to the Selecting Official in numerical rank order unless a recommendation out of rank order is justified based upon any of the factors listed in the following section. The Competition Manager will review the amounts requested for each selected application (including costs for computing and networking services) and recommend the total duration and the amount of funding, which may be less than the application and budget requested. The Selecting Official will review the recommendations.

### C. Selection Factors

The Competition Manager shall select awards in rank order unless a selection out of rank order is justified based upon any of the following factors:

1. Availability of funding
2. Balance/distribution of funds
  - a. Geographically - For Competition 1, the South Central US is a higher priority
  - b. By type of institutions
  - c. By type of partners

d. By research area

e. By project types

3. Duplication of other projects funded or considered for funding by NOAA/Federal agencies

4. Program priorities and policy factors - For Competition 1, the South Central US is a higher priority

5. Applicant's prior award performance

6. Partnerships with/participation of targeted group

7. Adequacy of information necessary for NOAA staff to make a NEPA determination and draft necessary documentation before recommendations for funding are made to the Grants Officer.

The Selecting Official makes final recommendations for awards to the Grants Officer who is authorized to obligate the funds.

#### D. Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates

Projects for both competitions are expected to start on September 1, 2013.

Successful applicants will receive notification that the application has been recommended for funding by an official of the NOAA Climate Program Office. This notification is not an authorization to begin performance of the project. Official notification of funding, signed by a NOAA Grants Officer, is the authorizing document that allows the project to begin. Notifications will be issued to the Authorizing Official and the Principal Investigator of the project. Unsuccessful applicants will be notified that their application was not selected for recommendation.

## VI. Award Administration Information

### A. Award Notices

Successful applicants will receive notification that the application has been recommended for funding by an official of the NOAA Climate Program Office. This notification is not an authorization to begin performance of the project. Official notification of funding, signed by a NOAA Grants Officer, is the authorizing document that allows the project to begin. Notifications will be issued to the Authorizing Official and the Principal Investigator of the project. Unsuccessful applicants will be notified that their application was not selected for recommendation.

### B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

The Department of Commerce Pre-Award Notification Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements are set forth in the Federal Register notice of December 17, 2012 (77 FR 74634). The full posting can be found on the Federal Register's website:

<http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2012-12-17/pdf/2012-30228.pdf>.

### C. Reporting

Award recipients are required to submit financial and technical progress reports. These reports are to be submitted electronically to <https://grantsonline.rdc.noaa.gov>. The first technical progress report covering the first 9 months of a multi-year award is due 10 months after the start date of the award. Each subsequent technical progress report covering a period of 12 months is due 12 months after the previous report. The comprehensive final technical progress report is due 90 days after the expiration date of the award.

The Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 includes a requirement for awardees of applicable Federal grants to report information about first-tier subawards and executive compensation under Federal assistance awards issued in FY 2011 or later. All awardees of applicable grants and cooperative agreements are required to report to the Federal Subaward Reporting System (FSRS) available at [www.FSRS.gov](http://www.FSRS.gov) on all subawards over \$25,000.

### D. Data Sharing Plan

Environmental data and information, collected and/or created under NOAA grants/cooperative agreements must be made visible, accessible, and independently understandable to general users, free of charge or at minimal cost, in a timely manner (typically no later than two (2) years after the data are collected or created), except where

limited by law, regulation, policy or by security requirements.

1. Unless otherwise noted in this federal funding announcement, a Data/Information Sharing Plan of no more than two pages shall be required as part of the Project Narrative. A typical plan may include the types of environmental data and information to be created during the course of the project; the tentative date by which data will be shared; the standards to be used for data/metadata format and content; policies addressing data stewardship and preservation; procedures for providing access, data, and security; and prior experience in publishing such data. The Data/Information Sharing Plan will be reviewed as part of the NOAA Standard Evaluation Criteria, Item 1 -- Importance and/or Relevance and Applicability of Proposed Project to the Mission Goals.
2. The Data/Information Sharing Plan (and any subsequent revisions or updates) will be made publicly available at time of award and, thereafter, will be posted with the published data.
3. Failing to share environmental data and information in accordance with the submitted Data/Information Sharing Plan may lead to disallowed costs and be considered by NOAA when making future award decisions.

## VII. Agency Contacts

Please visit the CPO website for further information <http://www.climate.noaa.gov/>. You can also contact the following for more information about specific priorities (note - please allow up to two weeks after receipt for a response):

- " Competition 1 - New RISA awards
  - " 1.a. - Adam Parris ([adam.parris@noaa.gov](mailto:adam.parris@noaa.gov))
  - " 1.b. - Caitlin Simpson ([Caitlin.simpson@noaa.gov](mailto:Caitlin.simpson@noaa.gov))
- " Competition 2 - Regional Research Partnerships
  - o Priority 3: Preparing for floods in urban coastal communities
- " Adam Parris ([adam.parris@noaa.gov](mailto:adam.parris@noaa.gov))
  - o Priority 4: Scenario and management planning processes

" Caitlin Simpson (caitlin.simpson@noaa.gov)

o Priority 5: Drought monitoring and Prediction products to support decision making

" Daniel Barrie (Daniel.barrie@noaa.gov)

o Priority 6: Climate impacts on marine and Great Lakes ecosystems

" Laura Petes (laura.petes@noaa.gov)

#### VIII. Other Information

None